

profit to himself or any one else. On the other hand we have known a good life to close without any triumphant dying testimony,—a life that surely passed into the heavens, unless there is some other place for constant believers and good Samaritans. Undoubtedly there is great joy in an "unclouded view" at the dying hour, but it is no different joy from that which may be always ours, if our daily life is a steadfast walk with God.

An Explanation

The paper on "Foreign Missions," by Brother Cassel, is concluded in this issue, and with it there was to appear a brief review of the paper, but other duties interfered with the preparation of the review. Our readers must make all allowance for the work in an office where so many different duties devolve upon one man. Please preserve last and this week's papers, and read again the article referred to, especially the first part, God's Plan. The review will appear next week.

A Neglected Luxury

Some one has written eloquently of the luxury of giving. With all its passionate hunger and thirst for luxuries, human nature seems to be a stranger to this one. Its ideal luxury is that of having. "It is more blessed to give than receive." "Yes," you say, "no doubt this is true, but receiving is good enough for me. I don't want all the good things, all the blessings. It is true that I fail to do as much as I ought to do, and am not as good as I ought to be, but I don't expect to be perfect in this world." Humility is a good thing, but the convenient humility of parsimony is more likely to win the contempt than the approval of God and his angels. The best, the wisest, the inflexible financier of the universe has told us to lay up treasures in heaven, and this splendid door of opportunity is open to every one, even the humblest. And it is possible for the most poverty-stricken man in the world to invest as much in the celestial savings bank as a Rothschild or a Vanderbilt.

Tell the Truth

It always pays to tell the truth, and it never pays to tell the untruth. Truth is something too sacred to be denied. "Buy the truth and sell it not," is a wise proverb, though thousands fail to heed it. A young man just out of the penitentiary applied to an express company for a situation. He was obliged to answer a long list of questions. They came to this one, "Were you ever discharged?" He hesitated. His crime had been burglary. When he made his resolution to lead a good life he had not thought that it would be required to confess anything about his past. To tell the truth was to lose, as he thought, this chance. "Must I answer

that question?" he asked, looking troubled, "Certainly, were you ever discharged?" "Yes, sir." "Where from?" "The penitentiary." The questions continued, the man's application was sent in and, to his astonishment, he was given a position. It always pays to be true. One day while General Grant was in the White House an important conference was being held when the servant brought up the card of a visitor. One sitting near the door said to the servant, "Tell the one who sent up the card that the president is not in." "No," said the General quickly, "tell him no such thing." Then, turning to his friend, he quietly remarked, "I don't lie myself and I don't want my servants to lie for me." Years afterwards when Grant lay ill, his testimony was called for in an important case. The lawyers and attendants went into his room. When he was ready to testify the regular oath was not administered. They knew he would speak the truth. One who thus holds truth sacred is always to be trusted in any position in life. Truthfulness and faithfulness go hand in hand, and always find admirers, even among those who are untrue and faithless.

An Open Peril

In the laudable effort to raise money for the manifold objects of benevolence and religion, churches and societies may sometimes be tempted to resort to very questionable methods. It is possible to fall into the error of supposing that worthy purposes will atone for improper expedients. What promises to be a famous case in point is the recent exploit of the Southern Methodist church, which by a series of shrewd deceptions and prevarications induced the Senate of the United States to pay an alleged war claim of nearly \$300,000,00, for alleged damages to the Publishing House of that denomination. The scheme was "worked" by the authorized agents of the church, and since the methods employed have been exposed, a heated controversy has raged between those who would like to keep the money, and those who are not willing to set any price upon the honor of the church. It is a muddle which they could not afford for ten times the money they got from the tax payers. There is no moral difference, however, between a big fraud and a little one, and if we habitually countenance frauds of every assortment in our church picnics and festivals, our sacred bazaars and auctions *ad libitum*, where things are unblushingly sold for three times their value, when the temptation of a big grab comes along we are poorly armored against it. In marked contrast with the Southern Methodist church is the policy of the Southern Presbyterians, who sternly frown upon all sorts of fairs, festivals, and other brands of sacred muck

rakes, and allow no other means of raising money for the Lord but the honest thrusting of the willing hand deep down into the consecrated pocket. This is the best in the long run. It is a pitiful spectacle to train people to give, only when they are getting back an equivalent in the shape of some trash for the stomach. Verily they have their reward.

Piety and Preparation for the Pulpit

No amount of intellectual strength can ever take the place of piety in the preparation for the work of the pulpit. He who brings the message of salvation to a lost, dying people, must be more than a man of intellect. Culture alone is not sufficient. Piety, real genuine piety, is the greatest element of strength in the minister of the gospel. He needs intellectual culture, but he needs the culture of the heart equally as much if not more. The minister of the gospel speaks for God, and surely he can not deliver his message faithfully nor with power unless he has first been with God and secretly communed with him. Along this line of thought Dr. Cunningham Geikie makes some pointed remarks in the *Homiletic Review* as follows:

But in such a sacred profession as the ministration of religious truth the first preparation for profitable study must necessarily be sincere personal religiousness. Luther's words are hence forever true: "*Bene precasse est bene studuisse*"—right praying makes right study. For it is self-evident that the words of Job, "The inspiration of the Lord giveth understanding," must be specially true of those studies in which the loving and reverend knowledge of God is the very beginning of wisdom. How, indeed, shall he attune himself to heavenly meditations who is a stranger to communion with Him in whom they both begin and end? A prophet is one who speaks as the mouthpiece of God, and no man has a right to be a preacher who is not a prophet. If he be not, he is an actor, playing in a part, not a sincere man, which in Christ's vocabulary is to be a "hypocrite." A burning-glass of ice may transmit the sun's heat, but only to neutralize it by its own cold. The lips of the preacher must be touched with the divine fire which God gives for the asking, before his studies can be efficient aids in his great commission. It was when John was "in the Spirit" that the voice spoke the message to the churches through him. Without God we can do nothing worthy either in the pulpit or for it.

The Sorrow of the Soul

He must indeed be devoid of sensibility who is not sometimes moved in the depths of his soul by the pathos of life's sorrows, by the threnody of severed ties, by the memory of sweet faces forever vanished, by the lingering music of loving voices hushed in everlasting silence. And this emotion more often and more profoundly moves us as we grow older, and find ourselves more and more left alone in the world, and left behind, by those who were wont to walk with us in this pilgrimage, by the friends who rejoiced in our joy and sorrowed over our sorrows.

Ah, what a treasure is that friend whose eye ever beams with the kindly light, and